

5.2. Change management by the King – in an international context (Gyula M. Szabó)

5.2.1. Introduction

In modern European politics, regional collaborations, such as the Visegrad Group (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, and Slovakia), play an important role in shaping policy. These countries, led by Hungary and Poland, have recognized the value of unified positions to exert greater influence on European affairs. The tradition of Central European cooperation dates back centuries, with notable historical roots in the Visegrad meeting of 1335, where Hungarian King Charles Robert brought together the Polish and Czech kings. This summit laid the groundwork for future alliances and trade routes, eventually leading to the Hungarian-Polish Personal Union of 1370 under King Louis I (the Great), son of Charles Robert.

Despite Louis I's successful reign in Hungary, his rule in Poland, achieved through the Personal Union, was met with mixed reactions. While Hungarian historiography celebrates Louis as a significant figure, the Polish perspective is less favourable, viewing him as "Louis the Hungarian" and seeing his reign as a decline from the successes of Casimir III. This thesis aims to understand how these contrasting perceptions coexist and why Louis' reign in Poland was less successful than in Hungary.

To explore this, I will use modern management and change management theories, analysing whether Louis made strategic missteps during his accession to the Polish throne. I will examine what actions were taken—or not taken—that could have smoothed relations with the Polish nobility and populace, potentially leading to a more successful personal union.

My previous research on the reign of Hungarian King László I (Saint) used leadership methodology to determine whether his success was due to well-judged actions. Similarly, in this thesis, I will analyse Louis I's reign, hypothesizing that his rejection in Poland was due to missed opportunities in his leadership approach.

The study will include a historical overview of 14th-century Central Europe, focusing on Hungarian and Polish perspectives. Drawing on both Hungarian and Polish historiography, I will also review management tools from modern literature, aiming to bridge historical and contemporary leadership theories to address my research questions.

5.2.2. Background, the rise and unification of the two countries in the 14th century

At the start of the 13th century in Hungary, King Béla III's sons, Imre and András, weakened royal power through extensive land donations to gain political support. András II further strained the kingdom's resources through foreign campaigns, leading to the adoption of the Golden Bull in 1222, modelled after the Magna Carta, to curb his excesses. Béla IV, who ascended the throne in 1235, faced conflicts with the nobility as he tried to reclaim lost royal lands. However, after a devastating invasion by Batu Khan's Mongols in 1241, he shifted to a conciliatory approach, ending internal land seizures to focus on national unity. His son, Stephen V, briefly ruled after Béla's death, but his reign was short and tumultuous.

Following Stephen's death, the country entered a period of instability with oligarchs exerting control over large regions, leaving the monarch, László IV, unable to reclaim power. After his death in 1290, the royal house of Árpád became extinct with Andrew III's death in 1301, sparking a succession crisis. Multiple claimants, including Wenceslas of Bohemia, Otto Wittelsbach, and Charles Robert of Anjou, contested the throne. Charles Robert, with support from the Pope and southern nobles, eventually secured power through multiple coronations.

Charles Robert's reign focused on dismantling the power of the provincial oligarchs, culminating in his victory over Aba Amade at the Battle of Rozgony in 1312. By 1321, with the death of his final rival, Máté Csák, Charles began significant economic reforms, including reviving mining and streamlining the currency system. He also established a new aristocracy through honorary estates, ensuring their loyalty by making land tenure dependent on royal service.

His marriage to Elisabeth of Poland in 1320 solidified ties with Poland, and this alliance proved beneficial, particularly during Poland's unification under Wladyslaw Lokietek. Diplomatically, Charles Robert also sought to resolve his claim to the throne of Naples through a marriage alliance between his son Andrew and Johanna of Naples. By the end of Charles Robert's reign, Hungary had stabilized politically and economically, with stronger ties to Poland but wary relations with Bohemia due to the ambitions of its king, John of Bohemia.

5.2.3. The Visegrad royal reunions, the entry of Central European states onto the international political stage

Charles Robert of Hungary gradually restored Hungary's sovereignty and ended political and economic anarchy, allowing the kingdom to become a key player in international politics by the 1330s. This success paved the way for the Visegrad royal summit in 1335 between Charles Robert, John of Luxembourg (Bohemia), and Casimir III (Poland). During this summit, Bohemia renounced its claim to the Polish throne in exchange for compensation, and trade routes were established to boost commerce between Hungary and the other two kingdoms (Engel et al., 2005).

The Visegrad meetings also addressed dynastic matters. At the 1339 Visegrad summit, it was agreed that Charles Robert's heir, Louis, would succeed to the Polish throne if Casimir III died without a son. This agreement opened the possibility of a union between Hungary and Poland, which was formalized in 1370 when Louis became king of both countries. Such unions were not uncommon in medieval Europe, as seen with the personal unions between Hungary and Croatia, the Iberian crowns of Castile and Aragon, and the Kalmar Union in Scandinavia.

The Visegrad summit marked Hungary's re-entry into international politics, and its effects were felt for decades. While the summit established Hungary as a strong regional power, the kingdom also maintained diplomatic ties with Poland, helping Casimir III in his efforts to unify and strengthen Poland through military victories and legal codification. Casimir's reign culminated in the prominent Krakow summit of 1364, which hosted many European rulers, demonstrating Poland's growing prominence.

In conclusion, the Visegrad royal reunions were pivotal in shaping Central European politics, fostering alliances, resolving territorial disputes, and enhancing trade.

5.2.4. The new king of Hungary: Louis I (the Great)

Louis I (the Great) of Hungary, despite not being the firstborn son, became heir after the early deaths of his brothers. Raised to rule, he observed his father's statecraft and military decisions, becoming a resolute statesman by the time he ascended the throne at sixteen. While his father excelled at diplomacy, Louis leaned more toward military campaigns, waging successful wars across Europe, from the Balkans to Italy. His campaigns in Naples, however, though militarily dominant, did not lead to lasting

political success due to a combination of papal interference, international politics, and geographic challenges.

Louis' conquests were often undermined by external factors. In the Balkans, he briefly controlled northwestern Bulgaria but realized that governing distant territories with Hungarian lords was impractical. He then released the Bulgarian ruler Stracimir, who became a vassal. In Poland, Louis supported King Casimir III against Lithuania and other rivals.

Throughout Louis' reign, tensions with Venice over Dalmatian cities led to several wars. His victories, particularly during the Personal Union when his banner flew over Venice's St. Mark's Square, symbolized his power but did not provide lasting stability. His reign was marked by emotional decisions, such as his campaign to avenge his brother Andrew's death in Naples. His impulsive execution of Prince Charles of Durazzo and others, perceived as responsible for his brother's murder, turned public opinion in Naples against him (Dümmerth, 2003).

Domestically, Louis displayed gratitude toward his subjects for their loyalty during his military campaigns. After returning from Naples, he held a law day in Buda in 1351, confirming noble privileges and reinforcing the Golden Bull of 1222, which regulated the nobility's obligation to fight for the crown. He abolished taxes on southern nobles and codified the principle of "one nobility," ensuring privileges for the Croatian nobility who had long supported his family.

Diplomatically, Louis maintained strong relations with the papacy. Despite his earlier frustrations with papal decisions, he eventually benefited from Pope Urban V's support. This was crucial when Emperor Charles IV sought to interfere with Louis' claim to the Polish throne by proposing a marriage between his son and Casimir's illegitimate daughter. Urban V blocked the marriage and reaffirmed Louis' right to the Polish throne, cementing his succession.

In 1370, after Casimir III's death, Louis inherited the Polish crown under the treaty signed during his father's reign. His international reputation was solidified, and he became a key figure in Central European politics, respected as a statesman and ruler. Louis' reign marked Hungary's political and military rise, with significant influence across Europe. On 17 November 1370, Louis was crowned King of Poland.

5.2.5. Hungarian-Polish personal union - Lajos Nagy versus Ludwik Wegierski

When Louis I (the Great) of Hungary inherited the Polish throne through his mother's lineage, he faced significant challenges in winning over his new subjects. Despite his fluency in several languages, including Hungarian, French, and German, his refusal to learn Slavic languages created a barrier between him and the Polish people. Although Latin was the official language, it wasn't enough to foster a deeper connection with his subjects, especially in the politically divided Poland. Louis, accustomed to the centralized unity of Hungary, was unprepared for the distinct regionalism in Poland, particularly the divisions between Greater and Lesser Poland. His refusal to hold a second coronation in Gnezen, the capital of Greater Poland, offended local lords, setting the stage for tension (Szilágyi, 1895). Additionally, his decision to return quickly to Hungary and leave his mother, Queen Elizabeth, in charge, exacerbated Polish resentment. Elizabeth's administration, dominated by Hungarian officials, clashed with Polish nobility, leading to unrest (Bertényi, 1987). The situation culminated in violent riots in Krakow, where hundreds of Hungarians were killed (Bertényi, 2018).

Elizabeth's departure from Poland did little to ease tensions. Her replacement, László Opoliai, was quickly removed at the request of the nobility, and Elizabeth resumed control until her death in 1380. Following this, Louis appointed a council of regents led by the Bishop of Cracow, but discontent persisted.

Louis' foreign policy decisions further alienated the Poles. His renunciation of claims to Silesia and loss of territories such as Santok and Dresden weakened Poland's strategic position. Additionally, Lithuania and Mazovia grew stronger, while Louis attempted to sever the Russian principality of Halychi from Poland, deepening political fragmentation (Katus, 2001).

To win favour with the nobility and secure the succession of the House of Anjou in Poland, Louis issued the Privilege of Kassa in 1374, exempting the Polish nobility from state taxes in exchange for their support (Topolski, 1989). This move bought loyalty but further weakened the crown's authority. Historians view Louis' reign in Poland as a period where Poland lacked an independent policy, both internally and externally. Louis treated Poland as a part of his broader empire, using it as a pawn in his dynastic ambitions rather than fostering its sovereignty. His policies focused on securing his family's future rather than addressing Poland's needs.

In conclusion, Louis I's rule over Poland was marked by deep cultural and political

divisions, resistance from the nobility, and a focus on securing the Anjou succession rather than uniting the kingdom.

5.2.6. Change management - a methodological overview

Change management, while both old and new, has evolved significantly over time with management. Early pioneers like Frederic Winslow Taylor in the late 19th and early 20th centuries laid the groundwork with scientific management aimed at improving production efficiency (Vaszkun, 2012). The movement reached a global impact (Vaszkun, 2014; Vaszkun & Tsutsui, 2012). Post-World War I, the focus shifted towards human resources and motivational studies, reflecting the growing complexity of organizational structures (Vaszkun, 2016). Kurt Lewin's 1947 model of change, a key milestone, introduced a three-step process for organizational transformation. However, independent studies on change management became prevalent only in the 1980s as businesses faced increasingly dynamic environments, demanding constant adaptation.

Change Management Strategies

Change management strategies are divided into several approaches, each differing in focus. Benne (1976) identified four primary strategies:

1. **Normative-reductive:** Focuses on cultural change through inclusion.
2. **Rational-empirical:** Assumes that if stakeholders understand the benefits of a change, they will support it.
3. **Action-oriented:** Emphasizes group collaboration in developing action plans.
4. **Power-coercive:** Involves a dominant coalition using rewards or punishments to enforce change.

These strategies can be used individually or in combination.

Change Process Models

There are numerous change process models, with the three most popular discussed here:

Lewin's Three-Stage Model

Kurt Lewin's 1947 model describes three stages of change (Lewin, 1947):

1. **Unfreezing:** Preparing the organization to accept that change is necessary.
2. **Changing (Moving):** Implementing the change.
3. **Freezing (Refreezing):** Ensuring that the change is solidified within the organization.

Lewin's model emphasizes overcoming resistance and balancing forces that drive or hinder change. Although widely applicable, modern organizations may find its cyclical approach less relevant due to the constant need for adaptation in today's fast-paced environments.

Kotter's Eight-Stage Model

John Kotter expanded on Lewin's framework, offering an eight-step model for managing change (Kotter, 2012):

1. Establish a sense of urgency.
2. Build a guiding coalition.
3. Develop a vision and strategy.
4. Communicate the vision.
5. Empower broad-based action.
6. Generate short-term wins.
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change.
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture.

Kotter's model emphasizes the importance of sequential steps, likening it to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where each stage builds upon the previous one (Farkas, 2013). Skipping steps or incomplete implementation can hinder the change process.

Csedő and Zavarkó's Integrated Model

The integrated model from Corvinus University of Budapest combines elements from various change theories (Csedő & Zavarkó, 2019; Csedő & Zavarkó, 2021). It consists of three main phases, each with four key activities, allowing flexibility in execution. This

model does not enforce strict sequentiality between steps, recognizing that some activities may occur simultaneously or in reverse order, depending on the organization's needs. Unlike other models, implementation, monitoring, and maintenance are treated as a continuous process, not distinct phases.

These models of change management provide a framework for analysing historical events, such as the accession of Louis I to the Polish throne. By applying these theories, it becomes possible to assess whether Louis' actions or inactions contributed to the success or failure of his rule. In the next section of the thesis, I will explore how these stages of change unfolded during Louis' reign in Poland and evaluate their impact on his acceptance as king.

5.2.7. Organisational resistance and ways to deal with it

Resistance to change is common in organizations, even with well-managed processes (Vaszkun, 2013). Often, resistance arises when change threatens individuals' interests, is poorly communicated, or challenges the status quo. Leaders and change managers play a critical role in identifying and addressing this resistance. Kotter and Schlesinger (Asch, 1994) outline four main causes of resistance:

1. **Self-interest:** Fear of losing one's position or status.
2. **Lack of trust/misunderstanding:** Inadequate communication or unfamiliarity with the leader.
3. **Divergence of judgement:** Differing views on the necessity or goals of the change.
4. **Low tolerance for change:** Concerns about personal ability to adapt.

Wissema (2000) adds that fear is often the root of resistance, particularly when changes are significant, imposed quickly, or when employees fear loss of control. He emphasizes that organizational myths often fuel this fear.

Csedő and Zavarkó (2019) identify three additional sources of resistance:

1. **Technical resistance:** Preference for familiar processes.
2. **Political resistance:** Threats to existing power dynamics.
3. **Cultural resistance:** Conflicts with established norms and values.

To overcome resistance, Kotter and Schlesinger (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1989) propose six strategies:

1. **Information and communication:** Clear and honest communication about the change.
2. **Participation and involvement:** Involving stakeholders in the change process.
3. **Promotion and support:** Providing support to those affected.
4. **Negotiation and agreement:** Offering incentives for cooperation.
5. **Manipulation and co-optation:** Using influence to secure support.
6. **Implicit or explicit coercion:** Applying pressure when necessary.

Typical mistakes in change management include using outdated solutions, disregarding local contexts, ignoring core values, and pursuing rapid, large-scale changes instead of gradual ones. These errors often contribute to the failure of change initiatives. In the next section, I will explore whether such mistakes contributed to the resistance Louis I faced in his regency in Poland.

5.2.8. Learning organisation - organisational learning

The study of the learning organisations in the title is justified by the fact that the entry into force of the personal union was not the first increase in power and the acquisition of influence over significant territories in King Louis' practice as a ruler. In this context, it is a fascinating question whether the lessons of mistakes or failures that may have been made earlier were incorporated into later decision-making - and whether they were corrected to improve its effectiveness.

It is therefore worth defining the relationship between the two categories above. "A learning organisation is the end state of organisational learning, where the organisation has the capacity to continuously transform itself through the development and involvement of its members." (Csedő & Zavarkó, 2019, p.79) And accepting this, the definition of organisational learning used in our thesis is that "organisational learning is the process of improving actions through higher levels of knowledge and understanding." (p.79)

Argyris and Schön (1997) distinguish three forms of organisational learning as follows.

1. *One-loop learning*, where behaviour is corrected on the basis of mistakes, but the causes of the mistakes are not identified;
2. *Double loop learning*, where feedback is also given to the underlying concepts, changing not only the outcome but also the actions;
3. *Triple learning*, where the very reason for the existence of an organisation is questioned or redefined (in our example, a ruler exercising power in one country may aim to strengthen the country, but in the case of a ruler with several countries, the more important aim may be to inherit power over the whole empire for his dynasty).

In the next section, it is therefore necessary to analyse whether, on the one hand, Louis the Great had previously suffered any effects, disappointments or failures in a situation similar to the one we are examining, which could have led to the drawing of certain lessons, and whether, if they existed, these lessons later became an integral part of royal decision-making.

5.2.9. Examining Polish domination through change management

In this section, I combine the knowledge of the previous content units, i.e. I fill in the models of the theoretical change management part with the historical data presented earlier.

Change management strategies

I presented above two different demarcations that can be used to group change management strategies according to different criteria.

The first delimitation is categorised according to whether the change is managed centrally or locally. To classify Louis the Great's choices, we must see that the territories he ruled grew almost continuously during his reign and that he sought to make each province he acquired an integral part of his empire. It also follows, of course, that the establishment of the personal union, which brought about a considerable increase in territory, was not guided by any other intention, despite the fact that the personal union did not formally imply the incorporation of Polish territories into Hungary, nor the loss of their independence, nor any form of subjugation. In practice, however, the logic of

Louis's dynastic policy dictated otherwise.

Having opted for a strategy of centrally-led change management, with a desire for centralisation and standardisation, it has experienced the disadvantages of its choice of strategy, i.e. its stakeholders were far from being committed to the change that its accession to the throne brought, and its system of rule was far from flexible and swift. As a consequence, local centres of excellence that would have enabled a more efficient use of resources (political, military and economic) and would have provided stronger and more effective support for the ruler could not, of course, have been established.

The second typology also provides a framework for the division of change management strategies and, of the four categories mentioned, the decisions of the House of Anjou rulers can best be classified under the fourth, i.e. the strategy determined by power relations, since the first is based on involvement, which is not typically the case, the second is based on the rational self-interest of those involved, but the king who took the Polish crown in 1370 did not (especially at the beginning, when he came to the throne) set out sufficiently attractive values for this, while the third strategy is based on involvement, albeit through the implementation of group actions, work processes and projects. However, in contrast to the first three, the way in which it seeks to localise the dominant coalition and rely on them to control the country it has taken over, with their support, is clearly visible. It is true, it should be pointed out here that, although the Kingdom of Poland was legally united, it was not united *de facto*, and the Hungarian monarch who took the throne relied on the Lesser Polish nobility, and even alienated the Lesser Polish aristocracy with some of his initial gestures. In other words, especially considering that the centre of the Polish state was in fact the centre of the Greater Poland, while Louis was crowned in the Lesser Poland, the choice of strategy was not primarily a mistake, but rather a mistake in identifying the group he considered dominant, since the spectacular patronage of the Lesser Poland nobility aroused strong resentment among the Greater Poland nobility, which was inevitable in terms of both numbers and power.

The Polish reign based on Csedő and Zavarkó's integrated model

In this section, I will analyse the Polish reign of Louis the Great by applying the framework provided by Csedő and Zavarkó (2019), focusing on key categories relevant to leadership and change management. Although we lack direct evidence of the strategic methods used by Louis and his advisors, it is clear that his diplomatic corps had an established information-gathering network, evidenced by successful negotiations led by figures such

as Miklós Kont. Louis also had practical knowledge of Polish affairs due to his military campaigns and close ties with Casimir III, giving him firsthand experience of the region. Information sharing was likely limited to a narrow circle, with the ruling family keeping critical details close. Queen Elizabeth, who twice served as regent in Poland, might have been one of the few fully informed individuals. Hungarian diplomacy faced a significant challenge when the German-Roman Emperor proposed a marriage alliance that threatened the Visegrád Agreement. However, through considerable effort, the support of the Holy See was secured, ensuring the Polish throne's continuity under Louis's rule after Casimir's death. Despite having a wealth of information, Louis and his advisors seemed to override local conditions, imposing a top-down approach to the personal union between Hungary and Poland. This disregard for Polish traditions and interests contributed to the growing resistance. For example, Louis failed to create a willingness to change among the Polish elite, a critical oversight that would lead to further difficulties.

The creation of a dominant coalition is crucial in any change process. Louis sought to form one by relying on individuals with authority and expertise, but his coalition, primarily supported by his mother and a narrow faction of Polish nobles, lacked broad-based support. His decision to entrust his mother with Polish governance, thinking her Polish heritage would help, backfired. Elizabeth's difficult personality and reliance on Hungarian officials alienated the Polish nobility. The coalition's narrow focus on one region of the kingdom, while ignoring others, created deep internal divisions and weakened the overall effort. A shared vision for change, aligned with Polish core values, could have alleviated this resistance. However, Louis's approach prioritized unification and control from a position of power rather than fostering a partnership with the Polish nobility. His refusal to respect Polish autonomy, including his renunciation of Silesia, further alienated the Polish political elite, who had hoped to reclaim the territory.

As we move into the planning and implementation phase, Louis's leadership choices proved problematic. He entrusted operational leadership to his mother and later László Opoliai, but the transition of power was fraught with issues. During Elizabeth's regency, decisions were often stalled, with both the king and the regent deferring responsibility to each other. After Elizabeth's death, the creation of a three-member regency council did little to stabilize governance. Louis's personal involvement in earlier military campaigns suggested a more hands-on approach, but his absence during the critical period of Polish governance only deepened the sense of disconnect.

The communication of a new vision, a key area for successful change, was also a failure.

Louis communicated that Poland would fall under the Anjou crown per the Visegrád Agreement, but he did not frame this in a way that resonated with the Polish nobility. His limited time spent in Poland, combined with his focus on other parts of his empire, meant he failed to foster a sense of shared destiny with the Polish elite. As a result, key aspects of change management, such as multichannel communication and respecting the past, were neglected. The values that defined Casimir's reign, such as strong leadership and the consistent defence of Polish interests, were absent from Louis's rule.

Political support for Louis's regime was similarly weak. He misjudged the power of the Greater Polish nobility and the broader political landscape. His attempts to homogenize Poland through top-down policies only further alienated local stakeholders. Queen Elizabeth's autocratic rule and the Hungarian presence in Poland exacerbated tensions, culminating in the anti-Hungarian uprising in Krakow, which forced Elizabeth to flee. The lack of engagement with key Polish stakeholders left Louis without the political backing needed to enforce his rule effectively. Involvement of local stakeholders in developing an implementation plan was almost non-existent. Louis and his advisors relied on a narrow group of supporters, and as a result, the broader Polish nobility had little input in shaping the personal union. This lack of inclusion meant that Louis failed to build the broad support needed for the union to succeed.

By the time of implementation, monitoring, and maintenance, the failure to address key decisions had made it difficult to correct course. Although some attempts were made, such as the introduction of new incentives to calm anti-Hungarian sentiment, these measures were reactionary and did little to address the underlying issues. The privileges granted at Kassa to the Polish nobility were concessions made to quell unrest rather than steps toward building a unified state. While these concessions temporarily pacified the Polish elite, they ultimately weakened central power and laid the groundwork for future challenges to royal authority.

Quick victories, which could have solidified support for the personal union, were absent. Instead, the Polish people faced territorial losses, and Louis's decision to renounce Silesia further eroded his credibility. The sacrifices demanded of Poland were seen as too great, with little tangible benefit to the kingdom.

Monitoring of the change process was ineffective. Louis's absence from Poland and the reliance on a regency council meant that any intervention in the political process came too late, often in response to widespread unrest. The change of regents, such as replacing László Opuljai with a three-member council, was driven more by public anger than by any strategic decision-making from the king. Without effective monitoring, the

change process faltered.

Ultimately, the goal of institutionalizing change and securing Anjou succession in Poland was only partially achieved. While Louis's daughter Hedvig eventually became Queen of Poland, it came at the cost of severing ties with Hungary. The union between the two kingdoms was dissolved after Louis's death, and the territories he ruled were divided between separate dynasties.

Louis's failure to secure long-term success in Poland can be attributed to his disregard for local political realities, his top-down approach to governance, and his failure to engage the Polish nobility in a meaningful way. His leadership choices, communication failures, and neglect of stakeholder involvement all contributed to the collapse of the personal union between Hungary and Poland. Although there were some successes, such as Hedvig's eventual ascension to the Polish throne, these were overshadowed by the deep divisions and unrest that marked Louis's reign in Poland. His failure serves as a case study in how poor change management, lack of local engagement, and failure to communicate a shared vision can derail even the most well-intentioned plans.

Organisational resistance and management

In discussing organizational resistance, I have outlined both Kotter and Schlesinger's (Sandell & Janes, 2010) and Wissema's models (Wissema, 2000). Here, I focus on Wissema's framework as it is easier to apply and overlaps with the former, ensuring no gaps in the analysis. Wissema's categories of resistance are clearly reflected in our historical example. First, Louis the Great, both in leadership style and actions, showed insensitivity to certain Polish groups, relying on regents rather than personal leadership. This created friction, as shown during the anti-Hungarian riots in Krakow, where over a hundred of Queen Elizabeth's entourage were killed by the enraged populace. Additionally, Louis had to contend with external threats, such as when Ulászló Weiss was invited by Polish factions to challenge him.

The personal union under Louis felt forced on the Polish people. While the succession of Louis was secured diplomatically after Casimir III's death, alternatives were largely negated by Hungarian diplomacy, with the Pope defending Louis's claim. The speed of the change further compounded resistance; Queen Elizabeth arrived at the Polish court within days of Casimir's death, and Louis was crowned just two weeks later.

Poles also resisted because of dissatisfaction with Queen Elizabeth's rule. Her difficult personality, compounded by the inability to make clear decisions, strained Polish

relations. The Hungarian reliance on Lesser Poland's aristocracy also marginalized other noble factions, weakening support.

Organizational resistance factors are evident, particularly in the form of technical, political, and cultural resistance. Polish politics, after Casimir's reign, became subordinate to imperial Hungarian interests, creating a backlash against Hungarian dominance and resource redistribution. This intensified cultural resistance, as the dismantling of Polish political representation widened opposition to the changes.

The six strategies for dealing with resistance, outlined earlier, were poorly applied. There was insufficient communication to offer a compelling value proposition or show quick wins. Meaningful participation was lacking, with power concentrated in Hungarian hands. Negotiation was primarily manipulative, as seen in the Kassa negotiations where Louis placated Polish nobility by offering low taxes and promising Polish-born nobles in leadership roles—strategies that only worked short-term. Implicit coercion was also present, as the Anjou family's control, though legally justified, felt imposed.

In conclusion, mismanagement of resistance contributed significantly to Louis's failures in Poland, leading to recurrent crises and the eventual weakening of his position.

Typical errors

In the previous section, I identified four key errors in Louis the Great's governance in Poland. Each of these errors alone could hinder change, but their simultaneous presence almost guaranteed failure. When Louis realized his initial approach was provoking opposition in Poland, he sought to appease the nobility through the Kassa privileges, confirming their rights and reducing obligations. This echoed his earlier move at the 1351 Diet of Buda but differed in that, in Poland, he was attempting to secure the nobility's acceptance of his family's succession, not rewarding loyalty after a successful campaign.

Here, his first error: he applied an outdated solution to a new and unsuitable context. Louis viewed Poland as a unified province (Davies, 2006), ignoring its strong regional identities (Szokolay, 2006). He offended the nobility by refusing to hold a coronation in Gniezno, a key symbolic gesture for Greater Poland.

Second error: by ignoring the diverse nature of the country, he tried to impose unity rather than adapting to regional differences. The Kassa privileges also weakened central power, frustrating a nobility accustomed to an active foreign policy, especially after the loss of Silesia.

Casimir III had been a present, accessible king, while Louis governed from afar, often through regents, prioritizing Hungarian interests over Polish ones. Third error: his governance conflicted with Poland's values and political goals. Furthermore, his rapid one-step approach to change left no room for gradual adaptation, creating tensions and resistance (fourth error). As Ferenc Farkas notes, imposing a new culture too quickly can create organizational tensions and yield undesired results, a concept evident in Louis's Polish reign.

Learning organisation - organisational learning

It is important to consider research on organizational learning because Poland was not the first foreign territory where King Louis sought power. Examining whether he applied lessons from previous experiences can shed light on his decision-making in Poland. Organizational learning is defined as "the process of improving actions through higher levels of knowledge and understanding," (Argyris & Schön, 1997) so analysing relevant parallels, such as Louis's invasion of Naples two decades earlier, is valuable.

In Naples, Louis sought to avenge his brother's death without fully understanding local conditions. His actions—executing the Duke of Durazzo and dismissing the welcoming gestures of the Neapolitans—turned initial goodwill into hostility. This failure to account for local sensitivities foreshadowed his mistakes in Poland, where he similarly ignored local divisions and antagonized the nobility. A parallel case in Poland involves the privileges of Kassa, where Louis tried to placate the Polish nobility by replicating his earlier success with the Hungarian legislation of 1351. However, the approach failed due to the different political contexts. It is also worth noting that Louis reappointed Queen Elizabeth as regent despite her earlier controversial and ineffective rule, raising questions about whether this decision reflected a lack of organizational learning or historical necessity.

Louis's experience in Bulgaria, where he eventually realized that local involvement was crucial for maintaining power, partially influenced his governance in Poland. Although he relied on Hungarian regents, some local Polish leaders were involved. Overall, Louis's reign shows limited success in applying lessons from previous experiences, suggesting that organizational learning was either ineffective or incomplete.

5.2.10. Summary, final words

I aimed to explore in this essay how King Louis the Great, a significant figure in Hungarian history, became a rejected ruler in Poland and the reasons for his decline following the prosperous reign of Casimir the Great. I applied change management tools to the historical analysis presented in the first section. In the third part, I combined these disciplines to explain my research questions, using multiple analytical methods for a comprehensive understanding.

My goal was not to assess Louis's political achievements but to identify the factors behind his failure in Poland and explain the duality of his legacy as both Louis the Great and Ludwik Węgierski. From a change management perspective, Louis's government made several key mistakes during his accession to the Polish throne. They overlooked Poland's internal divisions, neglected Polish goals, and failed to recognize the need for Louis's personal involvement. This lack of engagement led to a sense of subordination among the Polish nobility and the outbreak of anti-Hungarian rebellion in Krakow.

Despite viewing Poland as a unified state, Louis deepened regional divisions by relying on the Lesser Polish nobility, further alienating other factions. His primary goal—securing the Polish throne for his dynasty—was only partially achieved. Although his daughter Hedvig became queen, strengthening Polish-Lithuanian ties, after Louis's death, his territories were no longer united, and the vision of a unified empire was never realized.

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